



IMPORTANCE OF RETRIEVING YOUR MEDICAL RECORDS

Nistha Tamrakar
Chicago, USA

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As we continue with the rapid rise of technology and changes in healthcare, it is crucial to retrieve a copy of your Medical Records for your personal file. Every individual is entitled to complete access to their chart from any medical facility that has ever provided care. Most individuals are not aware that this information can be requested however it is very simple to do with a few easy steps.



Retrieving your medical records ensures that you keep your medical history forever. If you are an individual that treats with multiple physicians and specialties, having your own copy allow new physicians to always have access of your medical history and this accurate information improves patient care and the communication between you

and your physician. In addition, having up-to-date copy of your health information will prevent redundant care. This will benefit you financially because you might not need to take repeat tests, immunizations and labs. Last but not

least, having a copy for your medical history makes a difference for family members and future family members. If certain diseases run in the family, previous records of family members that received similar diagnosis can aide in the treatment of other family members experiencing the same diagnosis and can predict future medical conditions.

Now most might say that they do not want to go through that procedure, it might be long and tedious; however it is very simple with a few steps. The first step





is to obtain an Authorization of Health Information Form. This form can be located at most healthcare facilities at their medical records department or can be accessible through the facility's website online. Once the form is filled out completely, the individual can send it via mail/fax directly to the facility they need copies of records from or they can drop it off. Depending on the policies and procedures of each facility's medical records department, the records process can take anywhere between 7-30 business days.

Individuals should also be able to request a copy in an electronic format or receive paper copies. When the records are compiled, the facility will mail the records directly to the individual, share it via online portal or have it ready for pick up. Most facilities also do not charge patient for medical records, and

if there is a fee, it is calculated on a per page rate.

Lastly, if you are not sure what documentation you need to request, the best option is an abstract. Abstract basically means summary of your medical records. It typically includes history and physical reports, discharge summary, operative reports, consultations, labs, radiology, specialized tests and most recent outpatient visits.

The rewards of keeping up with your medical records are quite obvious. The steps of obtaining the records are also pretty easy and simple. Now it's up to you to take action of your healthcare and start the process of requesting a copy of all your records. In this day and age, as healthcare is constantly growing and changing, be an advocate for your own healthcare and take the necessary steps to ensure you have all documentation of your personal health information.

Ms. Nistha Tamrakar, holds a credential as Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA). She is Account Manager for the Medical Records Department at Loyola University Medical Center.

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Happy New Year

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